



Photo by Airman 1st Class Mark Kuhta

# argest, safest, best in the world describe 896th MUNS

By Ms. Monique Staskiewicz  
AWFC Public Affairs

A squadron nestled beside Sunrise Mountain holds the key to our nations security. Since 1954, the 896th Munitions Squadron has been a tenant of Nellis supplying the military services with munitions.

“Our primary mission is to store munitions for the Department of Defense,” said Lt. Col. Tony Vela, 896th Munitions Squadron commander.

The munitions complex covers over 790 acres and contains numerous storage structures. The complex houses two maintenance facilities and over 100 various types of vehicles for transportation.

“We are the largest above-ground storage complex in the United States Air Force,” said Col. Vela. “We have the capabilities to do depot level maintenance

here at Nellis or to deploy teams worldwide. And, we have the capabilities to transport assets anywhere in the world.”

Although the facility is next to Team Nellis, the two communities have different agendas.

“Our mission is real world. Nellis has their training commitments and goals and we ours,” said Col. Vela.

Col. Vela, a twenty-year veteran of the Air Force, feels that he learned from the best.

“I had crew chiefs with fourteen years of training to learn from. Now being a commander, I have some crew chiefs that are much younger with three to four years experience,” said Col. Vela. “They are bright, motivated and good at what they do. You can give them a challenge and watch them rise to the occasion and I just have to make minor course adjust-

sure to watch them perform.”

The squadron handles all transportation and repair of weapons.

“Our vehicles are contracted by General Services Administration, they maintain our specialized vehicles such as tractors, forklifts and tractor-trailers to transport assets,” said Col. Vela.

“We have annual safety inspections that are done jointly with the Air Warfare Center and Kirtland Air Force Base, N.M., that are continually rated outstanding,” said Col. Vela. “Air Force Materiel Command and Air Combat Command do a joint inspection on Nellis and on our unit.

“We have a very long record of excellence. We just received an award from the Department of Defense for sustained service without having any accidents,” Col. Vela said.

The 99th Security Forces Squadron

supplies the munitions complex with security.

“The 99th Security Forces Squadron is responsible for providing the bulk of security for our assets,” said Col. Vela. “We have a wonderful partnership and one of the best relationships between security forces and a munitions squadron that I have ever seen.”

“I believe the 896th MUNS and 99th Security Support Forces units have some of the very best people,” said Lt. Col. Benny Martin, 99th SFS. “The 896th truly believes in its motto of ‘nothing less than perfection’ and demonstrates it on a daily basis.

“The 896th MUNS is an integral part of the Air Force and Nellis missions through its storage, maintenance, inspections and testing of DoD assets, as well as their outstanding representation of Nellis through community service.”

**Left, Airman 1st Class Nicholas Keinrich and Senior Airman Benjamin KaKritz, 896th Munitions Support Squadron, move a practice munition during training. The 2,000-pound practice munition simulates exactly the size and weight of the real thing.**

**Right, Staff Sgt. Jerome Clevenger and Tech. Sgt. John Putnum (far right) inspect the fire extinguisher on a 6K forklift. Regular inspections are all part of the benchmark safety program in place at the 896th MUNS and help earn them Department of Defense recognition for their excellent safety record.**

**Below right, the front gate at the storage area is a good example of the no-nonsense security attitude taken by the security forces professionals who guard the facility 24 hours-a-day.**



Photo by Airman 1st Class Mark Kuhta



Photo by Airmen 1st Class Ashley Sorrels